

NORTH DAKOTA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
QUARTERLY MEETING
AUDIO CONFERENCE – STATEWIDE POLYCOM
January 12, 2017

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present

Russ Cusack	Kirsten Dvorak	Vickay Gross
Joseph Hall	Becki Hoff	Genie Lang
Julie Magnus	Kevin McDonough	Gillian Plenty Chief
Darcy Severson	Susan Sisk	Jason Sutheimer

Members Absent

Rodney Gillund	Jamie Hall	Deborah Jendro
Bruce Klootwyk	Marshall Longie	Darren Moos

Chairperson Darcy Severson called the meeting to order at 1:00pm. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Agenda

Action: A motion was made by Joseph Hall and seconded by Susan Sisk to accept the agenda. Motion carried.

Approval of September 2016 Minutes

Action: A motion was made by Susan Sisk and seconded by Joseph Hall to accept the SRC quarterly minutes from its last meeting on September 19, 2016. Motion carried.

DVR FFY 2016 at a Glance Statistics – Warren Granfor

Warren reviewed the 2016 Vocational Rehabilitation Statistics including goals and trends.

DVR Budget & Legislative Update – Russ Cusack

Russ Cusack explained the division's state budget request is to fully match federal VR grant funds. Any reduction to State General Fund (GF) will result in the agency loss of \$4 in federal funding for every \$1 reduction in GF. The current VR match is 78.7% federal dollars and 21.3% state general fund.

HB 1135 combines the Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The Committee is duplicative of the SRC. HB 1135 recommends the Governor appoint two additional members to the SRC – Executive Director ND Association of Community Providers and DHS's Developmental Disabilities Director. Vickay Gross recommended the SRC membership committee be involved in this transition.

Committee Chair Reports

Membership/PR Committee – Joseph Hall, Chair

Joseph Hall accepted the nomination as Chair of the Membership/PR Committee. The Council has one vacancy to fill for the Parent Training and Information position which will be a representative identified by Pathfinder Parent Center. The current disability percentage is at 50% and there is work to do in recruiting to reach the 51% disability requirement. The Town Hall meeting has been tabled.

Resource Committee – Jason Sutheimer, Chair

The Resource Committee is recommending VR replicate the employee survey using the existing instrument as a baseline. The Committee will look at modifying the questions in the future.

Planning/Evaluation Committee – Kirsten Dvorak, Chair

The Planning/Evaluation Committee held a special meeting on January 11, 2017 to review two VR policies. These policies were presented to the full council.

Job Readiness, Placement and Short-term Training Policy

Robyn Throlson provided an overview of the purpose of the policy. The intent of the policy is to provide the best job placement match for the individuals VR serves through direct counselor work or contracting for services with a Community Rehab Provider.

Supported Employment Policy

Robyn Throlson provided an overview of the purpose of the policy and the changes related to WIOA.

Action: A motion was made by Jason Sutheimer and seconded by Gillian Plenty Chief to approve both policies as presented. Motion carried.

Regional Updates

Region 7 Update – Tom Schiwal, Regional Administrator from Bismarck

Tom Schiwal reports they have had turnover of half the counselors, the vision rehabilitation specialist and the business services specialist in the past year. They have been fully staffed for the past 6 months and have staff from diverse backgrounds. Overall the region is doing well based on numbers including an increase in new applicants, a slightly smaller increase in plans at this time last year, an increase in successful rehabs, and higher caseloads. There has been a decrease in the length of time individuals are in service status. Business is good with a low unemployment rate of 2.5%. One counselor is reaching out to farmers/ranchers to provide rural services and is coordinating with Farm Rescue. Counselors are assigned to every school for transition services. Staff has been developing relationships with more employers.

Region 1 Update – Andrea Meyer, Regional Administrator from Williston

Andrea Meyer reported there has been an increase in oil so there is an increase in jobs. Most of the positions are heavy work and rough hours. Most of the current students are going to Williston State College for hands on trades and want short term programs.

Andrea reports more applicants on the autism spectrum. All counselors are helping with the job readiness and placement services. They are a little ahead of their closure goals despite being short a counselor. Bethel Homes, Menards, and Walmart have been great local resources for successful placements. Andrea reports employer contacts are up so they are looking forward to more rapid retention cases.

Tribal Updates

Gillian Plenty Chief reported Standing Rock Vocational Rehabilitation hasn't staffed many consumers due to the snow and dangerous travel. They are actively working with transition students and have seen a significant increase from last year. Standing Rock VR has worked with the Bismarck Regional VR Office to improve their work on joint cases. There is talk of building a cultural center on the Tribal Land.

Three Affiliated Tribes were not funded by RSA for the next two years. The tribe is looking at alternative funding. The economy has died off with the oil revenue going down but it is projected to rise again.

Next meeting is April 27-28, 2017.

Action: A motion was made by Kevin McDonough and seconded by Gillian Plenty Chief to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.